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L. G. Conner, Founder of Canyon City, Dealer in Ranches, Farm Lands, City Property and Loans.

This volume would not become complete without a worthy tribute to our townsman, L. G. Conner, the founder of Canyon City and pioneer settler of Randall County. He is a native of Cooper County, Missouri, and a son of James F. Conner who owned and operated the first flouring mill in all that part of the country for a number of years. His youngest of two sons, and the only one with his father, a simple and God-fearing people. Two brothers and sisters, the only living members of the family when they moved from Missouri to Juvenal's Creek, and a hungry Creek County, Texas, in 1876. Texas meant to the sky and up

he goes.

On Christmas day A. D. 1887, Mr. Conner had surveyed and located section 34 on which Canyon City now stands, and on January 3rd, 1888, he placed the first building material on the ground. There were then but five actual settlers in the county including himself, and not many in the whole Panhandle country. And only five organized counties to his knowledge. School houses and churches were a rare thing indeed. Then a county was an ordinary sized ranch. Land was valued at 25 cents to \$1.00 per acre. The nearest railroad point was Clarendon and Canadian, Texas, each about 100 and 110 miles respectively, until the Ft. Worth and Denver railroad was completed to Amarillo in the spring of 1888. Then the business of the country was confined to the cattle interest. Today we have many of the diversified interests, commercial, agricultural, transportation, religious, social and educational.

With keen foresight, Mr. Conner saw the great possibilities of this section and established himself here in the cattle business, where he found an abundance of fresh, pure water and rich pasture for his stock. During the spring of 1888 he laid out the town site of Canyon City, and on July 27th, 1889, Randall County was organized and Canyon City elected the county seat. And on August 12th of the same year in honor of the organization of the said county and the election of the county seat, a general picnic, barbecue and lot drawing was held and attended by the ranchers, settlers and their families as well as investors from many miles around.

He was the first postmaster and kept the office in a dugout, then the only office in Randall county, the said postoffice having been established only a short time before the organization of the county. He built the first stone building, established the first real estate office and built the hotel Victoria, which he named in honor of Mrs. Conner. It is still the leading hotel of the place. Mr. Conner has been closely

to invest will do well to consult him before they buy. He gives special attention to correct descriptions and values and you may rely upon them, whether you see the land or not. He can sell lands in tracts to suit purchaser.

It is due to such men as Mr. Conner that our city and county have made progress so rapidly. He aids every enterprise that has for its object the betterment of conditions and improvement. He does not hesitate to advise an investor to buy where values will surely double, and he practices what he preaches in this particular. He has not much patience with "landowners" and Texas has some of them, as every new country has. Some men are born pessimists and will always be that, and renters.

"This is a pessimist and pessimist. The difference is quite small. The pessimist sees the darkness. The optimist sees the light."

Mr. Conner's modern country home lies one fourth mile east of the city limits, where he and his estimable family reside.

Mrs. Conner has favored us with some early reminiscences which are more nearly to the point than we could possibly relate them for she has lived through it all and has pleasant retrospection that all of our readers will enjoy, and read with both pleasure and profit.

"I never felt more like running than when the editor asked me for a few reminiscence thoughts of our early Plains days. A native of South Carolina, brought up in a carefully guarded southern home, not growing to the height of five feet, two inches, weighing less than one hundred pounds and scarcely more than twenty years old, found me a dweller of the Plains.

To tell of pleasures and hopes, trials and tears of those days and years would fill a book. On one occasion we were lost for three days on the plains, but as it was raining and the lakes were full of water, we suffered no inconvenience for water and managed to cook as we had dry fuel in the wagon. On the lakes ducks raised their young and I remember so well the races I



This is the home of Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Conner, one of the best of the homes in Canyon City, and one of the finest in the county.

agination they were running. Almost instantly it would change to some dry bones, and a great city would rise in the air with castles and lovely buildings. Then again it would be a beautiful lake surrounded by tall trees until you would be lost in wonder and admiration.

"When I spent the nights alone the stars would seem to come out to cover the whole world like a benediction and nowhere have I seen stars so near, friendly and human as on the Plains and on those nights I always looked up and not down.

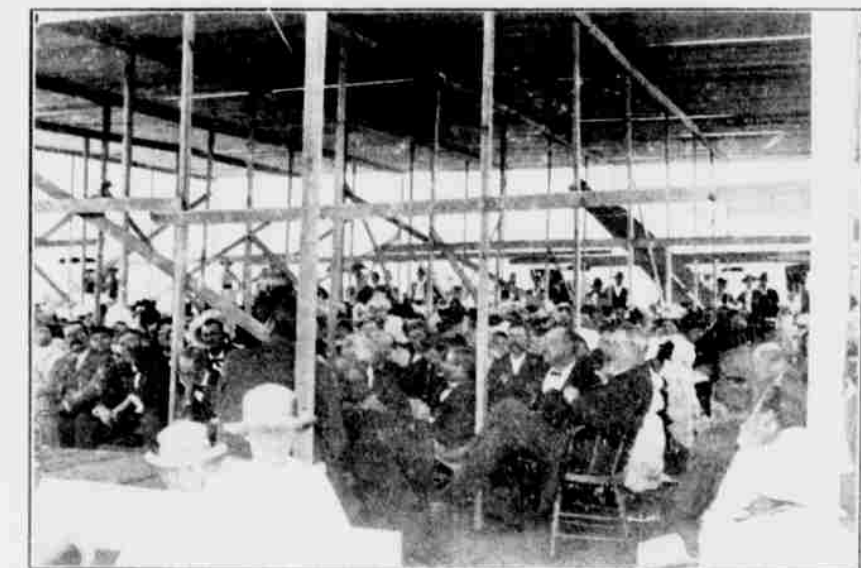
I must not forget to speak of the many, generous and helpful plains cowboy. Our mail was brought from Clarendon to the

days by a trail, week after week. Now, Mr. Editor, it is just a lot of our real experiences and it seems to me that the only way to tell it is to tell it as it is, where there are no forms, all listening, occasionally and saying 'Mamma, I wish I had been there.'

"Of course Mr. Editor, it is a comical fact that it is not wise to bring into print of discourse, too much about ones self unless, indeed, people grounds exist to justify it and it is humbly and skilfully done, and above all things not 'overdone.' Other wise the trip of an egotist is certain to be acquired. An egotist you know has been defined to be one who talks about himself so much that he does not give you any time to talk about yourself. So if you will allow it, I will men-



This picture shows the speakers platform in the background and the tables provided for the convenience of the people at the picnic. In the picture and barbecue at the location of Canyon City on August 12, 1889.



The above is a portion of the assembly (crowd) listening to the speakers on August 12, 1889, when Canyon City was formerly opened. A great many people from a distance were present on this occasion.

At the time Mr. Conner settled here, pioneering in this part of Texas was not free from hindrances. The first settlers were beset by hardships, bad laws and bad methods, but they came through them all safely and have reached an enduring prosperity.

But the epoch of pioneer life has passed. The events of the early settlements of the country were the most stirring and trying in its history. Those who lived through that period are not likely to forget the days of drought and the winters of discontent, and it is but meet that we drop a word here in honor of



The above is a picture of the picnic and lot drawing at the time of the founding of Canyon City on August 12, 1889. Practically every man, woman and child in the county, besides a large number from other places, were present that day to participate in the first big celebration in Randall County. At that time Mr. Conner's home, a "dugout," was the only residence on the town section, and a part of a building for Mr. Hammond's blacksmith shop, was the total of Canyon City.



This street scene in Canyon City was taken in December, 1904, when Canyon City was the market place for the entire south Plains country. People came for supplies for a distance of a hundred or more miles from the south. The cotton shown on the wagons was grown upon the Plains. The wooden store buildings have now been replaced by large and beautiful brick business houses.

identified with the growth of Canyon City and Randall county since the organization. He is still the same unassuming, level-headed business man, of strict integrity and with the same abiding faith in the future of this great prairie country that he had from the beginning. His remaining in Randall county for twenty-two years, carries with it some weight as evidence of his confidence in the country. He places an investment as he sees opportunity, or will sell you a choice farm or tract of land and is never afraid to invest where the money is safer than in the bank, and with a constant rise in the value of real estate.

Owners of property who place it in Mr. Conner's hands may feel perfectly safe, that he will use every reasonable effort to render faithful service, whether for sale or rent. Those who wish

had after the cripple duck only to find that she was leading me from her young, but I was often rewarded by catching the little fellows and enjoying their own ways and seeing them swim and dive.

"We located our camp on North Tule in Swisher county and from there we traveled over the plains often being away three or four weeks at a time. It was not often I had the pleasure of seeing a woman but we had our cattle and the herds of antelope, droves of wild mustangs, and beautiful cranes feeding at the lakes. I had a lovely white crane for a pet. When it stood erect it was as tall as myself. On days that I would be alone the mirage would people the plains. If it happened to be a herd of antelope they would instantly turn a band of horsemen going at a breakneck speed and to my im-

agination they were Indians. Tale much by their ever thought of kindness. From there I delivered to us by one of them number known as a horse cowboy.

No postmaster could have been more careful and considerate of our interests. Often with our mail would be brought his many zines and books from the ranch and from there we traveled over adding much to our profit and pleasure. Many other kindnesses were too numerous to mention. Not often I had the pleasure of seeing a woman but we had our cattle and the herds of antelope, droves of wild mustangs, and beautiful cranes feeding at the lakes. I had a lovely white crane for a pet. When it stood erect it was as tall as myself. On days that I would be alone the mirage would people the plains. If it happened to be a herd of antelope they would instantly turn a band of horsemen going at a breakneck speed and to my im-



Miss Mary Conner is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. L. G. Conner, one of the best of the homes in Canyon City, and one of the finest in the county. Miss Conner is a very accomplished young lady, and Canyon City has not a fairer representative of being than Miss Mary.